

POLICE/SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	GENERAL ORDERS
SUBJECT: Crime Prevention	NUMBER: 2-18
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1999	REVIEW DATE:
AMENDS/SUPERSEDES: GO 2-18, January 1988	APPROVED: _____ Chief of Police/Sheriff
CALEA STANDARDS: 45.1	VLEPSC STANDARDS: ADM.21.01-.02

NOTE

This order is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third-party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

INDEX WORDS

Crime prevention
Neighborhood Watch
Operation Identification
Security surveys

I. POLICY

Crime prevention is the anticipation, recognition, and appraisal of crime risks and the initiation of action to remove or reduce such risks. Crime prevention is the responsibility of each employee of the department: in all daily business, employees shall actively apply crime-prevention ideas and methods. Departmental policy, therefore, is to promote crime prevention by developing and implementing procedures and programs which reduce the opportunity for or lessen the loss arising from crime.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to outline procedures for the delivery of crime prevention services.

III. PROCEDURES - Responsibilities

A. Police officers, generally

1. All officers upon request and when appropriate shall provide knowledgeable, instructive advice to the public concerning steps which can be taken to reduce the opportunity for or lessen the loss from crime.
2. All officers upon request and when appropriate shall conduct brief surveys of homes or small businesses and orally advise the owner or occupant of security strengths and weaknesses.
3. All officers shall be aware of and where appropriate offer their assistance to crime prevention activities taking place within their assigned patrol areas such as neighborhood watch, business watch, safe home, and CB radio patrol.
4. All officers shall make referrals to the appropriate resource either within or outside the department in response to crime prevention requests which exceed their knowledge or capability to accommodate.
5. No officer or other employee of this department shall advise any person that the use of any crime prevention suggestion or program will prevent that person or any other person from becoming the victim of a crime, but will only lessen the probability of victimization.
6. Crime prevention activities undertaken by police officers shall be reported on daily activity reports.

B. Crime prevention specialist

[Note: Virginia Code §§ 9-173.19, -.20 establishes the responsibilities of the crime prevention specialist and relevant eligibility requirements. These guidelines are voluntary and do not compel a law-enforcement agency to certify an officer as a crime prevention specialist.]

1. The department's crime prevention specialist is responsible for developing, implementing, and coordinating the department's crime prevention program. This assignment of responsibility does not relieve other officers of being aware of and involved in crime prevention procedures and activities.
2. The crime prevention specialist shall study crime trends that are generally considered preventable and develop procedures and programs to reduce the opportunity or lessen the loss from crimes.
3. The crime prevention specialist shall consult with police officers, supervisors, and investigators to analyze crime and suggest how police and citizens can better combat it.

4. The crime prevention specialist shall develop an expertise in all phases of crime prevention including, but not limited to,
 - a. security hardware;
 - b. alarm/warning systems;
 - c. lighting;
 - d. basic residential and business construction practices;
 - e. media relations;
 - f. public speaking; and
 - g. use of volunteers.
5. The crime prevention specialist shall establish a working relationship with architects, developers, contractors, and others in the building trades to identify and correct practices used in the planning, design, and construction of any building and the space surrounding it which create the opportunity for crime.
6. The crime prevention specialist shall develop a working relationship with local building officials, community planners, and zoning officials to review plans for new construction or development within the community to identify and correct components of those plans which may create unwanted crime opportunities.

[Note: Paragraphs #5 and #6 above refer to crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). CPTED represents one of the most significant advances within crime prevention practice in recent years. Contact the Crime Prevention Center, DCJS, for further information.]

7. The crime prevention specialist shall establish a working relationship with print and broadcast news media to promote and advertise crime prevention procedures and programs.
8. The crime prevention specialist shall establish a working relationship with professional, civic, and community groups to develop, promote, and implement crime prevention programs.
9. The crime prevention specialist shall establish a working relationship with other local, state, and national government and non-government crime prevention programs to exchange information on past, current, and planned crime prevention activities.

10. The crime prevention specialist shall coordinate with fire prevention personnel to ensure that crime prevention procedures and programs do not compromise fire safety programs and that fire safety programs do not compromise crime prevention programs.

IV. FORMAL PROGRAMS

Officers shall develop, coordinate, or otherwise participate in the following programs:

A. Neighborhood Watch (Business Watch)

The Neighborhood Watch is the formal organization of residents to enable them to deter crime in their neighborhood. The program relies on their awareness of and concern for their fellow neighbors to detect or discourage suspicious or criminal activity.

[Note: "Neighborhood Watch" is not a generic name for a crime prevention program. The term is a trademark for a program created by the National Sheriffs' Association and should only be used with their permission. Its use here is illustrative of the type of formal crime prevention program that an agency might promote.]

1. Requests to establish a Neighborhood Watch (Business Watch) shall be forwarded to the chief of police/sheriff for action.
2. The chief of police/sheriff or his/her designee shall make an introductory presentation to the interested Neighborhood Watch group, maintain contact with the group once established, and contact it at least every three months.
3. Homes wishing to participate in Neighborhood Watch also must participate in the security survey and Operation Identification programs.
4. The chief of police/sheriff or his/her designee shall maintain a list of all Neighborhood Watch programs with names, addresses, and phone numbers of leaders and block captains.
5. The chief of police/sheriff or his designee shall provide quarterly crime reports to the Neighborhood Watch groups detailing the crimes which have been reported in their specific neighborhoods.

B. Security survey

A security survey is an evaluation of the security strengths and weaknesses of a home or business and presenting the evaluation to the owner or occupant for correction.

1. Patrol officers are authorized to conduct brief surveys of homes or small businesses upon request or if there is an apparent need, time permitting. Only oral recommendations are to be made.
2. Requests for in-depth surveys with written recommendations are to be forwarded to the chief of police/sheriff. Surveys of any large structure or facility are to be conducted by whomever the chief of police/sheriff selects. Outside agencies' crime prevention units may be asked to assist.
3. All security surveys performed by officers are to be considered information offered to the police in confidence. Surveys are not considered information available through Freedom of Information Act requests.
4. Officers making recommendations during security surveys shall not recommend any particular brand name product or device.

C. Operation Identification

Operation Identification is the retention of serial numbers or other identifying marks property owners use to assist in the identification and recovery of stolen property. When the property has no serial number, the owner is encouraged to permanently engrave the property in several places with an easily recognized and traced identification mark such as a driver's license or a Social Security number.

1. The chief of police/sheriff shall establish procedures for the loan of engravers for persons wishing to identify their property.

D. Site plan review

Site plan review is the review of site plans for new commercial or residential development or redevelopment to identify components of the plan which, once implemented, may create crime opportunities, and to make reasonable recommendations to correct the crime-related deficiencies in the plan.

1. The crime prevention specialist is responsible for all site plan reviews.
2. The crime prevention specialist shall contact the community planning department and request to review development or redevelopment plans for security-related strengths and weaknesses.

3. The crime prevention specialist shall visit construction sites and informally inspect projects for security strengths and weaknesses and then make informal suggestions for improvements to the appropriate project officials.

E. Other programs

There are many other crime prevention programs aimed at specific types of crimes. Many of these programs can be incorporated into public educational programs or Neighborhood Watch activities as needed. Some of these programs are

1. auto theft prevention;
2. child safety;
3. street lighting;
4. check fraud;
5. victim services;
6. elderly crime prevention; and
7. bicycle theft.

[Note: Agencies may contact the Crime Prevention Center, DCJS, for assistance in developing these programs.]

V. REPORTING

A. Recordkeeping

The chief of police/sheriff or his or her designee shall maintain up-to-date information on the following crime prevention activities for reporting and evaluation purposes.

1. Neighborhood Watch
 - a. Number of Neighborhood Watch programs.
 - b. Dates that specific Neighborhood Watch programs began.
 - c. Number of initial and follow-up Neighborhood Watch presentations.
 - d. Number of block captains.

- e. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of Neighborhood Watch program leaders and block captains.
 - f. Number of homes and businesses participating in Neighborhood Watch.
 - g. Number and types of reports made to police by Neighborhood Watch participants.
 - h. Number and types of arrests resulting from reports by Neighborhood Watch participants.
2. Operation Identification
- a. Number of times engraver loaned out.
 - b. Number of victim property identifications and returns made through serial number tracing.
 - c. Number of victim property identifications and returns made through Operation Identification number tracing.
 - d. Number of arrests made through serial number tracing.
 - e. Number of arrests made through Operation Identification number tracing.
3. Security survey
- a. Number of informal security surveys conducted by non-crime prevention personnel (residential and business).
 - b. Number of follow-up visits to site where security surveys were previously conducted.
 - c. Rate of compliance to recommendations found during follow-up visit.
4. Educational programs
- a. Number and types of programs.
 - b. Number of attendees.
5. Other programs

- a. Number and types presented.
- b. Number of participants or attendees.

VI. CRIME PREVENTION ASSISTANCE

Assistance in promoting crime prevention programs can be obtained from the following:

- A. Virginia Crime Prevention Center (established by § 9-173.16), Department of Criminal Justice Services, 805 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, 804-786-8467.
- B. Virginia Crime Prevention Association, 4914 Radford Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23230, 804-359-8120.

[Note: Crime prevention services are also promoted by the National Sheriffs' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.]